Creativity as a 21st Century Competence: An Exploratory Study of Provision and Reality

Abstract:

Recently, Creativity has begun to be talked about as a 21st Century Competency (UNESCO 2006). Several government endorsed publications have also stressed the importance of fostering creativity in the classroom (The Robinson Report 1999; DfES 2004; QCA, 2005). This study explores opportunities in provision to foster creativity following the new National Curriculum's introduction (DfE 2013) and attempts to go beyond this into daily classroom practices by interviewing teachers. Analysis indicates a wide variation in terms of in-school provision; certain schemes of work may be more successful at fostering creativity and that relying purely on the National Curriculum can hinder opportunities for creativity. Teachers interviewed valued creativity but found it hard to accurately describe incidents of creativity. Training has been designed to address this, although a pervading emphasis on schools' performativity will mean creativity will not be a 21st Century Competence unless there is a major policy change.

Introduction:

This paper seeks to explore the opportunities to foster creativity as a 21st Century Competency in some primary schools in England both in intention and reality, after explaining why creativity is necessary to promote in learners and addressing issues relating to creativity particularly within primary schools under the new National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). Creativity has long be considered a desirable attribute for learners to possess, particularly since the publication of seminal works by Shallcross and Torrance and the recommendations of the Central Advisory Council in Education in 1967, which has become known as the Plowden Report, referred to by Craft as 'The First Wave' (Craft 2004: 23). More recently, there was a drive towards using policy as a means to fostering creativity, with The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education Report (NACCCE) in 1999, the introduction of Creative Development as part of the Early Years framework (DfES, 2007) and Creative Thinking being recognised as a Key Skill in the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum in 2007 (DfES, 2007). Although some suspicion has sometimes been cast on attempts to foster creativity (McClaren 1999) in part due to creative students sometimes underperforming in formal school environments (Kim & Hull 2012) there has been a general trend of countries around the world adopting a favourable stance towards creativity in education. And, although exact definitions of what constitutes a creative learner vary, the widely held consensus amongst academics and industry chiefs is that fostering creativity is a necessity.

Creativity as a 21st Century Competency

Creativity is now being described as an essential 21st Century Competency (Robinson 2001, Pellegrino & Hilton 2012, Newton & Newton 2014), a term which in itself indicates the relevance of creativity in the modern age and moves creativity beyond being a 'skill'. On examining this term one understands that a competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects (involving technical skills) as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g. social or organizational skills) and ethical values (Ananiadou, K. and Claro, M. 2009). This definition of 'competency' is very similar to that given in the book *Key Competencies for a Successful Life and a Well-Functioning Society*:

> A competence is more than just knowledge or skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilising psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context. For example, the ability to communicate

> effectively is a competence that may draw on an individual's knowledge of language, practical IT skills and attitudes towards those with whom he or she is communicating.
>
> (Rychen & Salganik, 2003.p 4).

The term is further explored in a report by the National Research Council in the United States of America into effective teaching approaches. The Report differentiates between a general skills which can be applied in various contexts and 21st century skills as dimensions of expertise that are specific to- and intertwined with- knowledge within a particular domain of content and performance (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2014). They point to the latter description of skill as being more akin to a competence, which again demonstrates the deep level of understanding and knowledge one needs to possess a competency. In taking into the account these definitions we see that teaching for creativity involves teaching in a way that instils a deep-rooted attribute. For creativity to be fostered to the extent that it becomes a competence it has to be supported by both national strategy and in-school provision and in practice (NACCCE 1999).

Creativity in the new National Curriculum

Recently, however, despite what Craft & Hall have called a 'Tsunami' of change towards seeing creativity 'as fundamental to 21st century and living' Craft & Hall in Wilson 2015) it has been argued there creativity is being 'squeezed out' of schools by changes made to the National Curriculum. Indeed, creativity has been thrust into the forefront of a national debate surrounding priorities of England's education system, confined not just to academic circles, but involving teachers, politicians, parents, pupils, the business community and broadcast across a range of media outlets; thus making the subject particularly relevant to explore. This debate, focusing particularly on primary school education, has seen an outcry against 'teaching for the test' and a return to at least valuing, if not prioritising, fostering creativity in pupils, which had been an aim in late 1990s and early 2000s, which Craft refers to as 'The Second Wave' (Craft 2003). Yet, even when creativity was ostensibly endorsed by government policy and literature there has been confusion about what exactly creativity is and how it can fostered (Newton & Newton 2014). The problem is illustrated by the fact that even in official documentation encouraging creativity, approaches to how to foster creativity have not always been accurate; one example being in *Excellence and Enjoyment* (DfE 2003) which confuses technology and science.

Creative learners are essential to national economics and global innovation (Beghetto & Kaufmann 2010, Craft & Hall in Wilson 2015). In addition, being creative is of personal value; it enriches people's everyday lives and is what sets humans aside from most animals and In addition, it is empowering as it can equip people to function more effectively in everyday life (D. Newton in Creativity & Problem Solving; An Overview). It is now also the case that most writers on creativity agree that it is possible to encourage, or indeed inhibit, the development of creativity in young children (Sharp 2004). One would therefore expect that one of schools' priorities would be attempting to foster creativity in learners.

Method:

In order to explore the opportunities to foster creativity in both policy and practice a mixed method approach was chosen combining readily available nationwide policy documents with empirical data from schools. A multiple case study design was chosen to allow an exploratory, detailed examination of provision and practice in six schools (an overview of the schools is shown in *Figure 1*, below); a number commonly seen as appropriate for studies of this nature (Stake 2008). All schools were in Northern England. Multiple sources of evidence were collected form each school in order to increase construct validity (Yin 2003). It is widely documented that such a design enables deep probing (Cohen & Manion 1995) and in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam 2009). For the purposes of this study, the cases have been bound by year group and three National Curriculum subjects, Art and Design, History and Science, in line with the argument that time and activity are a means of bounding (Stake 1995). The decision to bind the case has been made to avoid a common pitfall associated with case study design of attempting to answer a question that is too broad or a topic that has too many objectives for one study (Baxter 2008). Whilst it is acknowledged that samples from six schools alone cannot result, in the usual sense of the term, a generalizable picture of how creativity is fostered in policy and practice the use of multiple or collective case studies has allowed for analysis within each setting and across each setting (Baxter 2008) and provides an eminently relatable picture, that is, findings to which others can relate and draw on in adapting their provision. (Bassey 2010).

	Curriculum followed	Faith school status	Size*	Eligibility for free school meals	% of SEN pupils
School A	Creative Curriculum	N/A	150 pupils	National average	Less than average
School B	N/A	N/A	150 pupils	Higher than national average	National average
School C	Learning Challenge	Yes	200 pupils	Less than national average	National average
School D	N/A	N/A	300 pupils	Higher than national average	National average
School E	N/A	N/A	100 pupils	Higher than National average	Higher than average
School F	School-designed themed approach	N/A	250	Higher than National average	Higher than average

*Figure 1- overview of three sample schools. *Approximated for anonymity*

Limitations of method

There are, of course some limitations in this method which must be acknowledged. Firstly, the sample of schools is relatively small and concentrated on one particular area of England. However, as previously mentioned it is not considered necessary for such case study designs to be any larger than six cases (Stake 2008) with some even arguing that three cases are enough (Yin (2009). The sample also consists of state-maintained primary schools only. Not all subjects were sampled, however the three sampled subjects meant that there was analysis of an Arts subject (Art and Design), a humanities subject (History and a STEM subject (Science). Additionally, there was no observation of the teaching of these teachers who may have been unwittingly fostering creativity in their lessons and so not mentioned it in interviews. Alternatively, lessons which they thought were providing opportunities to foster creativity may not have been, or they may have over emphasised opportunities.

Sampled schools

Samples were taken in the form of face-to-face interviews with teachers and school policies from Year Three in six primary schools. Schools were chosen on the basis that they performed similarly, but provided opportunities to explore differences because of the type of schools they were and because they all followed different schemes of work, In terms of performativity, all had been rated either Good or Outstanding by OFSTED; an indication that policies would be up to date and fit for purpose and that teachers put policies into practice. The fact that 85% of schools in England are rated Good or Outstanding also means the sample is representative of the level at which most schools operate (OFSTED December 2015). All schools sampled are state maintained local authority primary schools for children aged 5-11 meaning they follow the primary National Curriculum for all subjects. As aforementioned, the schools were also chosen to provide comparison; one school was a non-faith school following the Creative Curriculum, two were non-faith schools with split year groups (one 'Good' one 'Outstanding'), two non-faith schools without split or mixed years groups and one was a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided school. All six teachers were aged between 35 and 55 and had at least 10 years teaching experience in primary schools. All teachers had several years teaching experience in Year 3. As agreed, when granted ethical approval for this research, schools and teachers are not referred to by name. These measures ensured anonymity, increasing the likelihood of Head teachers to allow research to be carried out in their school (there was a 100% consent rate from all schools contacted). The assurances of anonymity also increased the level of trust between interviewer and the teachers interviewed.

Results:

Having compiled the results from textual analysis of curriculum documents with those of face-to-face interviews a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was undertaken to produce a general overview of results and is shown below in *Figure 2.* This precedes a discussion of themes which emerged from the data.

School A	Favourable	Unfavourable
Internal	Strengths • Half of schools had subscribed to a curriculum which actively wants to promote creativity. • Many cross-curricular opportunities. • Teacher values creativity of learners and wants to foster it. • Schools that subscribed to schemes which valued creativity ensured time was put aside for sampled subjects. • There was scope within the National Curriculum documents for teacher interpretation in all three sampled subjects.	Weaknesses • Outcomes highly dependent on having a teacher that is committed to the Creative Curriculum. • Teacher confusion between creative teaching and fostering creativity. • Teachers view opportunities for fostering creativity as mainly lying in arts based subjects. • School following the Creative Curriculum had every end of topic Key Task is predetermined by Creative Curriculum policy/ teacher planning in general impeded some opportunities. • No school had a specific creativity policy. • No school had undergone CPD training on creativity. • Only the Art National Curriculum mentions the term 'creativity'.
External	Opportunities • Open to CPD course in helping teachers to foster creativity. • Teachers felt their Head Teacher would support opportunities to foster creativity.	Threats • Introduction of weekly PATTS tests indicating a move towards performativity and adding to time constraints at three of the schools. • Concern over impending Ofsted visits at two schools might detract from creative opportunities in the medium term.

Figure 2 Strengths, Weakness, Threats and Opportunities to Foster Creativity.

Favourable attitudes to creativity

School documents and teacher interviews indicated a favourable attitude to fostering creativity in pupils. The type of school (faith or non-faith) and organisation of year groups (straight, split or mixed) appeared to have no discernable impact on teacher attitudes. All teachers appeared to value creativity and linked creativity with engagement and enjoyable experiences. There were no indications from the teachers that creativity was viewed with the suspicion that was discussed earlier or that schools are places conservative places where creativity cannot be encouraged (Hargreaves 1994 quoted in Craft 2000). During interviews, teachers talked enthusiastically about what they saw as evidence that children's creativity was being fostered and stated that it was important for children to participate in creative activities. In terms of how school policies or schemes of work impacted on practice, whilst schools varied in their approach, teachers were satisfied with the documents their school used. The teacher whose school followed the Creative Curriculum was genuinely excited to teach it and enjoyed working towards to the 'finale' of each topic. She felt that having a 'deadline' to work towards each half term ensured that creativity had to be valued and could not be ignored. Teachers who worked with the National Curriculum's framework for Year Three for all three subjects, enjoyed the freedom of not having to follow a scheme of work, feeling it allowed greater opportunity to follow the children's interests when appropriate. One school which did not subscribe to a particular scheme of work had 'Creative Weeks' at the start of each term which the teacher thought were a good way to start each term and ensured that even if Maths and English ended up dominating the rest of a half term children had least had some creative experiences in that week. The teacher following the Learning Challenge Curriculum felt that having a list of questions for each topic, as well ideas for cross-curricular links helped her plan lessons and made it easier to adapt to the new National Curriculum. She also felt that the 'Wow' introductory lessons or experience really caught the attention of most pupils and was a good way of engaging them as it was a creative way introduce a topic. Yet, this is, of course, teacher creativity and not child creativity. Documentary evidence and interviews indicated schools are keen to foster creativity in pupils, with creativity being mentioned in school policies and schemes of work in those that followed them, despite none of the schools have a specific creativity policy. The general ethos and organisation of the curriculum or diary to include 'creative' events, demonstrated there were opportunities to foster creativity in all sampled schools.

However, there was a pervading sense that many opportunities for fostering creativity were not being taken. Reasons for these missed opportunities can be divided into three main areas; teachers' understanding of creativity, shortcomings in provision and external pressures on teachers.

Teachers' understanding of creativity

Whilst interviews revealed that teachers were enthusiastic about fostering creativity in their pupils, their understanding of what this meant was vague, demonstrating that, for these teachers at least, creativity is, indeed, a complex and slippery concept (Prentice 2000; Philpott 2001, Newton, L. 2012). Their responses during interviews showed that they had problems in separating teaching creatively with teaching for creativity, with half showing creative resources they had made when asked for evidence of creative opportunities given to the children. Responses also indicated a narrow view of which subject domains were conducive to fostering creatively, based on a general lack of understanding as what constituted as being creative in a range of domains, with one teacher claiming, 'Science is really creative is it?'; thus echoing previous research showing that while primary teachers might know what constitutes creativity in general but they also need to know what constitutes creative thought in the context of individual subjects (Newton & Waugh 2014).

(a) Creative Teaching vs *Teaching for Creativity*.

Although almost two decades have passed since the publication of the NACCCE report (1999) which made a distinction between *teaching creatively* and *teaching for creativity* in its characterisation of creative teaching there still appears to a blurring of the line between the two in practice (Jeffrey & Craft 2004). Teachers seemed to think the terms teaching creatively or a creative syllabus were interchangeable with teaching for (fostering) creativity. This was most evident during the interview with the teacher whose school followed the Creative Curriculum. To evidence creativity being fostered in pupils, she showed me examples of how the 'Key Task' for the half term was revealed to pupils. The Key Task had been printed on A4 paper and had a themed border in keeping with the half term topic, along with a font that . The teacher had in essence produce a creative resource, she was teaching creatively which she was

understandably proud of because she said it had engaged the class and motivated them to start the topic, but, she had interpreted that as fostering creativity. Research has indicated that engaging pupils may be rewarding and deepen interest in a topic however a passing engagement being triggered may not necessarily have a sustained effect and is not a sign of creative learning (Newton, D. 2014). Similarly, the cross-curricular Science and Art topic used at the school following the Learning Challenge Curriculum, 'How can Usain Bolt run so quickly?' had, the teacher explained, instantly engaged the children due to the title, but when the actual scheme of work was examined for Science the content and assessment of the topic (describe and explain) had very little opportunities to foster creativity. Of course, teachers must give students content knowledge to improve their thinking (Baer, J. & Garrett, T. 2010) but, when interviewed the teacher admitted that there had been no time for investigative work and that students had been assessed on factual knowledge. The teacher was unable to give any example of how creativity was being fostered in Science lessons, instead she talked about the 'creative topic titles' that make the learning relevant to children and sound more interesting than the National Curriculum programme of study titles. I would again argue, that what the teacher has identified is creativity on the part of the schemes of work writers, entitling topics in a way that engages learners, and not children being creative.

Several teachers pointed to the children being taken on school trips in relation to Science and History as fostering their creativity in each subject. Inviting 'experts' or 'outsiders' to teach a lesson or workshop in a non-classroom encouraged creativity was also stated by three teachers as evidence of fostering creativity. One teacher stated, 'children found it (a lesson by an 'expert') interesting and more exciting because there was a sense of novelty about the lesson'. However, whilst there may well have been some creative learning occurring during these examples, what the teacher was describing was again, creative teaching.

Simply put, teachers gave examples of policies and practices which showed creative teaching when asked to give examples of the pupils' creativity being fostered. When probed on how creativity was being fostered by these examples, all three teachers found it extremely hard to do so accurately.

(b) Creativity as Arts based

Interviews indicated there was also a feeling amongst teachers that some subjects were not as conducive as others to fostering creativity, with one teacher stating, 'I can tell you a lot about creativity in my Art lessons, but might struggle with the others'. They struggled to give examples of creativity in Science beyond children carrying out investigations and it appeared they viewed these events as creative because they children were active and engaged and that it was a break from the routine of doing work at desks. Previous research has claimed that to foster and assess scientific creativity in a systematic and deliberate way, teachers need to know what constitutes creative thought in the context of primary science (Newton & Newton 2009; Newton, L.D 2012). None of the teachers appeared to have this knowledge, with one teacher stating, 'Science isn't really a creative subject is it?'. Only one teacher said she used questioning in Science to help children's understanding which she saw as contributing to their scientist creativity. As mentioned earlier, out of the thirty-six topics included in the Creative Curriculum only four were Science topic, indicating it not thought of as particularly creative subject. Assessment in Science at all six schools comprised mainly of being able to confirm, 'I can…' statements. Teachers also gave role-play as the most creative opportunity for fostering creativity in History and did not verbalise the possibility thinking or 'What if?' thinking aspect of History. Four teachers discussed the art activities carried out during History lessons as being creative, for instance making an Ancient Greek Temple from re-cycled materials or drawing historic figures. The fact that the National Curriculum does not mention the term 'creativity' in History and Science does little to help teachers think of these subjects as being creative in their own domains.

Shortcomings in provision

All sampled schools established their topics for each of the subjects in advance of starting the topic, although the extent to which outcomes were pre-determined varied. One school's curriculum was planned so far ahead that it followed a four year rolling cycle. Previous research indicates educators should not use a ready-made or predetermined unit or lesson plans before embarking on a topic:

Start-up activities can be selected and developed by facilitators, but how a cluster develops from there depends on the interests and skills of the students involved. This development takes place through discussion and the cluster facilitator takes the role of resource person, finding

resources and know-how needed to produce the product or deliver this service agreed on through discussion

(Renzulli & De Wet 2010, p.59).

Although they were writing specifically about Enrichment Clusters, I would argue that using a predetermined unit of work in the primary classroom is also not best practice, as it does not allow for the teacher to follow the interests of their students as the topic develops. Ironically perhaps, the school following the Creative Curriculum had the most pre-determined scheme of work; illustrated by a two year plan setting out the theme of each half term. The finale/ Key Task of each half term also seemed to be pre-determined well in advance. When I asked the teacher what scope there was in terms of how the Key Task came to fruition, she said, 'the children can chose what role they play in the end task, but really the end task has to be pre=planned by us because we wouldn't be able to afford some of the children's requests for what the final task would be. If we plan in advance we can be on the lookout for resources. I don't think we'd have time to start looking at different options once the topic has started.' The teacher following the Learning Challenge felt one of the 'strong points' of the Learning Challenge Curriculum was that it's 'Wow' event was at the beginning of each topic enabled her to follow the children's interest as they developed. However, when examining the short term planning which the teacher prepared in advance of the topic, it appeared that much of the subject content and delivery was planned in advance of the 'Wow' event taking place. In theory, the schools that were not following a scheme of work had more freedom to follow children's interests as the developed over topics. The school which seemed to best put this into practice was one where teachers were very much given ownership of their lessons and a whole-school decision by teachers was that, in line with Union guidelines, teachers did not submit lesson plans to the Head Teacher. The teacher at this school said that this gave her freedom to plan ad hoc activities and for the timetable to be more fluid. At another school using only the National Curriculum the teacher pointed to the visit to a local dene which she had arranged after the children had shown an interest in pollution as part of their Rivers topic, which combined Science with Geography and found that using only the National Curriculum to establish outcomes and not being directed by a scheme of work allowed her to plan how a topic developed by following what interested the children. In turn this led, in her opinion, to children being 'more involved'. Although she was unable to fully articulate how this sense of ownership over their own learning fostered creativity the indication was that having a degree of choice over what one learnt enhanced creativity. However, she was also the teacher which most felt

that the demands of the National Curriculum for English and Mathematics hindered opportunities for creativity across the curriculum as well as the teacher whose faced the most external threats.

External pressures

Interviews with teachers revealed they felt, to a varying extent, external pressures (ie. not associated with shortcomings within the actual provision and teaching for creativity) hindered opportunities to foster creativity in learners. These pressures concerned performativity, something which has been identified as endemic in England's education system (Kohn 2015) and are discussed below.

Ofsted

There appeared to be a connection in the teachers' thinking between Ofsted Inspections (both preparing for and learning from) and the ability to foster creativity in pupils. Two schools had undergone Ofsted inspections earlier in the academic year and both given a 'Good' grading. A teacher from one of these schools felt that after a year of 'getting over' the visit there would be a drive towards ensuring they were given an Outstanding grading next time. She felt that this would impact on fostering creativity because there would be a focus on evidencing children's progress, especially in books, which would mean teachers would have less time to focus on areas on learning that were hard to measure and wondered if the Creative Curriculum would have to be abandoned in order to 'free-up' time usually ring-fenced to prepare for the Key Task. Indeed, the most recent Ofsted Report and found that in the section entitled, '*It is not yet an outstanding school because'*, the report did indeed draw attention to the quality and presentation of marking in some of the books, indicating the teacher's misgivings for the future had some foundations. Contrastingly, the teacher at the other recently inspected school, said her school had been buoyed by their recent 'Good' grading following a 'Requires Improvement (RI)' grading two years previously. Although her view that pressure would increase on teachers and pupils 'to perform' as the next Ofsted inspection grew closer. This teacher felt that the introduction of the Learning Challenge Curriculum since the 'RI' grading had been a contributing factor to the school improving as it offered structure and supported teachers in implementing the new National Curriculum whilst ensuring opportunities to foster creativity

were in place, through cross-curricular topics and questioning. When asked whether she felt Ofsted's grading was related to children's creativity being fostered, she said, 'I don't think so.' Teachers at schools with impending Ofsted inspections felt 'on edge' and claimed there was an intense culture of performativity.

Time constraints

Another external threat was lack of time. Teachers pointed out that not only was there sometimes a lack of time given to the sampled subjects, but in general the need to 'get through' National Curriculum content meant teaching for creativity was not a priority, even in schools whose internal curriculum policy had been chosen to specifically enhance creative opportunities. Therefore, Art, the only sampled subject where teachers where able to give specific and numerous examples of how creativity was being fostered, was often given very little space on timetables and when it was, several teachers admitted that they often had to abandon it to catch up with Mathematics or English. Additionally, teachers pointed to other commitments such as parents evening, assessment and events such as Sports Day as being time consuming. Indeed teacher workload is something which has been identified by teaching unions, with the ATL establishing a campaign, 'It's about time' to try and 'tackle the issue' (ATL 2016). The threat was greatest in schools that were due to have an Ofsted visit, particularly at one school trying to achieve an 'Outstanding' grade and better its current 'Good' rating which had adopted a new time-consuming marking policy. The teacher showed me a book to help explain why she felt the marking policy impacted detrimentally on attempts to foster creativity. The marking involved green and pink highlighting and a total of six different stamps with symbols to be used in margins and at the end of the piece of work, along with teacher comments. This teacher said, 'We have adopted this new marking scheme to try and get 'Outstanding''.

In this case, it seems that the demand on teachers to follow such a rigorous marking policy was therefore made from within the school itself, perhaps erring on the side of caution or misinterpreting the Ofsted handbook. The perception was that the Inspection and the school's approach to assessment as being a hindrance to creativity. The introduction of PATTs tests (progress tests which include a question from each area of the particular subject's curriculum) for mathematics at this, and another two schools, resulted in teachers worrying that a results a

dip in results would reflect negatively on their teaching ability and admitted that mathematics had increasingly spilled over into other lessons in an attempt to ensure progression in Pats test results. It appeared that such pressures hindered opportunities for risk taking and problem finding, which were not mentioned by any of the three teachers and which often take time are tend not to be favoured when performativity is stressed (Baer & Garrett, 2010).

The SWOT analysis showed both external threats and internal weaknesses. One external threat was the performativity culture in England's primary schools, demonstrated and exacerbated by SATS tests and League Tables. Although there have been so called 'u-turns' in educational policies recently, it is unlikely that there will be a complete overhaul of the nation's primary education system to address such threats and weakness. However, it may be possible to address one area of weakness; improving teachers' understanding of creativity by providing CPD (Career Professional Development) courses in this area. The findings in this paper echo those in the Scottish Executive report (SEED 2004) which noted that teachers were enthusiastic about the principles enabling the pupils to think creatively and independently but were less certain about the implementation and practice (Newton, 2012). Existing research has suggested that teachers with a sound understanding of what creativity looks like in the classroom and how it can be facilitated and encouraged could be improved through training (Ofsted 2006). Despite other pressures, training is likely to mean that teachers begin to identify and support creativity if it becomes more meaningful to them. After all, supporting creativity is not yet another experience to be added into an already over-crowded day, rather it should be embedded into all areas of learning (Newton, L.D. 2012). Even in a pressured environment, teachers that are trained to plan for, identify and encourage creativity are more likely to do so than those without training as illustrated by Ofsted's Creative Partnerships (Ofsted 2006). None of the three teachers interviewed had undergone any CPD training that specifically focused on fostering creativity. All teachers questioned said most of their training courses had focused on either assessment/ data input or First Aid. A Google search of 'CPD programmes for teachers' yields results from many dozens of training specialists in England, yet very few offer courses in the area of creativity. The National Union of Teachers (NUT), the largest teaching union in Europe with over 300,000 members (www.teachers.org.uk) offers four courses in the creativity section of its Course Guide 2016. These courses are *Ways into Shakespeare*, *Using film in the classroom*, *Music for Youth* and *Reading for Pleasure*; two are concentrating on English, one on Music and one is cross-curricular but with an emphasis on History; providing another

example of educators viewing creativity as belonging in the Arts domain (Bolden *et al.* 2010; Newton & Newton 2009; Johnson in Wilson 2015). A further example of the brochure conforming ~~to~~ outdated views of creativity is indicated by the fact it has a quote from Albert Einstein under the Creativity subtitle, compounding, albeit inadvertently, the outdated view that creativity is the preserve of a gifted few. On further inspection, details of all four courses do not mention how or why they are in the creative section on the brochure; one assumes they are there because they are Arts based. With the lack of genuine training in how to foster creativity, we recommend further training along the lines exemplified briefly in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: Creativity CPD Outline:

Creativity CPD Outline

This training session is aimed specifically at fostering creativity which is now being viewed as an essential 21st Century Competency which must be fostered in children in order to prepare them for the demands of modern living. It will take 90 minutes and a brief outlined below. It is suitable for Head Teachers, all teaching staff and teaching assistants.

Introduction: Brief talk with Power Point about the aims of the course and research that has argued for creativity to be seen as a 21st Century Competence.

Activity One: Trainees to complete a shot Likert scale test on creativity.

Discussion: In groups the answers can be discussed, the whole group can then share answers and compare results. This allows for the Trainer to assess particular areas for development, such as seeing creativity as Arts based etc.

Activity Two: the trainees will be invited to get into pair and each will be given an area of creativity which could be fostered during a lesson, such as, 'Problem Finding', 'Problem solving' 'Social Interaction' etc and will be asked to think of an approach or activity during that lesson which could encourage that type of creativity.

Discussion: Again, answers will then be shared and the Trainer will encourage others to offer constructive feedbacks and use the opportunity to address any misconceptions.

Creative Learning Examples: The trainer will introduce examples of activities which foster creativity, perhaps modelling an example if time allows with the teachers as pupils. These examples will be based on existing frameworks and examples found in Creativity for a New Curriculum 5-11 ed. Lynn Newton 2012 and Creativity in Primary Education ed. Anthony Wilson 2015.

Activity Three: Trainees will then work in small groups to think of any changes they could make which could help foster creativity in their classrooms.

Questions and Answers: Trainees will have the chance to share how they feel about the training and ask any questions, they will then be asked to fill out a brief feedback form so that the training can be modified if necessary.

Close: A handbook will be given to each teacher regarding questioning techniques, activity examples and information on compacted curriculum ideas which can help foster creativity.

A one-off training session will not provide a fully comprehensive understanding of any aspect of teaching and learning, and certainly not one as complex as creativity. However, I believe it will be beneficial for two reasons. Firstly, this study and existing research has shown that many teachers have a limited understating as to what creativity is and this training, albeit brief, will broaden and deepen their existing knowledge and understanding as it is vital for teachers to understand the polymorphic nature of creativity and feel confident in teaching for it across the curriculum (Newton & Newton 2009).Secondly, there has been a favourable groundswell towards a return to teaching for creativity echoed by the teachers interviewed for this paper. This momentum provides a favourable time to introduce such sessions.

Conclusion:

Although it has been claimed that the development of creativity have been lacking in the general ethos of many schools (Wilson, 2015) this research offers a pictures which is not so bleak. The general belief in all schools was that creativity in learners was something to be valued, with some having chosen schemes of work and explicitly set out in the curriculum policies. However, the significant variation in provision between the schools and the absence of a specific Creativity policy in each school, indicates that a vagueness still exists about the nature of creativity is and how to foster it. Even at schools which claimed to have 'creativity at the heart of their curriculum' teachers' responses suggested a lack of understanding as to how creativity could be fostered in different domains and confusion between teaching creatively and teaching for creativity.

Furthermore, whilst the National Curriculum programmes of studies for Art, History and Science do not preclude opportunities for creativity, they also do not provide teachers with any guidance as to how to promote it. The Learning Challenge Curriculum provided some support to teachers mainly through the inclusion of questions and by including a 'Wow' event at the beginning of a topic. It appeared that schools relying simply on the National Curriculum frameworks for Art, History and Science and the teacher's own resourcefulness, left what could

be described as a vacuum, which sometimes ended up being filled with an overspill of mathematics and English. In this way it would seem that the argument that the new Curriculum means schools are 'free to explore creative pedagogies on their own terms' (Craft *et al.,* 2013) does not always result in positive outcomes. Meanwhile, this research has supported the view that the demands of the National Curriculum for English and Mathematics are infringing on the opportunities to teach for creativity in the sampled subjects.

Although it is vital for children to acquire knowledge at school as the basis for creative thought and the development of critical thinking skills and productive thought (Newton, L., 2012) it has also been established that is no longer sufficient to have excellence in depth and grasp of knowledge (Craft & Hall p.18 in Wilson 2015). At present it appears that this is not being recognised by government policy on Education and creativity is not being viewed as a 21st Century Competency within national legislation for schools (Robinson, 2013).

All research has its limitations, but readers will be able to relate practices in general to the findings here and reflect on the reality of provision for fostering children's creativity as a 21st Century Competence. As yet, although creativity is referred to across arrange of subjects in the new National Curriculum (DfE 2013, Craft & Hall in Wilson 2015:17) it appears the pervading atmosphere of performativity means the reality is that schools' priorities lie elsewhere. And, whilst some schemes of works may be more conducive to fostering creativity than others, it is hard to imagine that whilst league tables, SATs tests and anxieties over Ofsted inspections exist, creativity will become a 21st Century Competency most pupils in English primary schools possess.

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